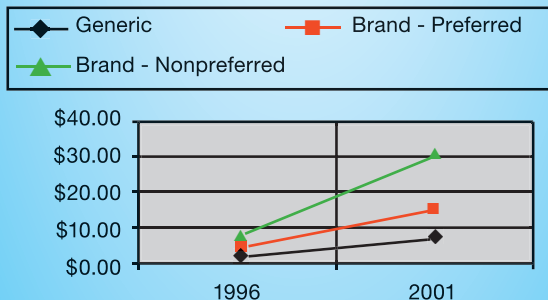


WARNING

CAUTIONARY TIPS WHEN BUYING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

- ☐ Always consult your physician and pharmacist for decisions related to your health and the medications you are taking.
- ☐ Be sure to pay attention to directions for taking your medication(s) and carefully follow those directions.
- ☐ Ask questions if you are unsure about taking any prescription drug, either alone or in combination with other drugs.
- ☐ Many people purchase prescription drugs from foreign countries, either in person, by phone or over the Internet. Even though you provide a valid prescription, the drugs you obtain from outside the U.S. are not inspected by the FDA for safety or reliability. For more information about the legality and safety of prescription drug imports, visit the FDA Web site at www.fda.gov.
- ☐ If you purchase your prescription drugs from multiple sources, be sure to inform your pharmacists of other drugs you are taking to avoid adverse interactions.

Average Co-Pays for Three- Tiered Formularies: 1996 vs 2001



Source: Novartis, Pharmacy Benefit Report:
Facts and Figures 2002.

For more information about prescription drug prices in Arizona, including the prescription drug survey, please visit the Arizona Attorney General's Web site at www.ag.state.az.us.



Terry Goddard
Arizona Attorney General

For additional information on Arizona's Senior Drug Discount Program, contact:

www.rxamerica.com/az_discount_home.htm

or call 1-888-227-8315 and ask for a State of Arizona Pharmacy Discount Application.

THE ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S GUIDE FOR PURCHASING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS



TERRY GODDARD
**ARIZONA ATTORNEY
GENERAL**

The Arizona Attorney General's Office is committed to protecting Arizona consumers, and recognizes that Arizonans are concerned about the high cost of prescription drugs.

This guide provides consumers with tips that can help you shop safely for prescriptions while finding the best prices available.

Prescription Drug Prices Climb in Arizona

Retail drug prices are continuing to rise nationally and in Arizona. From 2001 to 2002, nationwide drug prices rose at a rate of 9.5 percent--over three times the rate of inflation. In 2002, the national average retail price of prescription drugs reached \$54.58. Arizona prices also rose at a high rate, 8.6 percent from 2001 to 2002. The Arizona Attorney General's latest survey of prescription drugs reveals that for twelve commonly prescribed drugs, prices increased by an average of \$13.06 from September 2002 to November 2003.



Some co-pays for health care insurance plans have also increased as prices for prescription drugs have climbed. One study shows the average co-pay for brand-preferred drugs increased by an annual average rate of 18.1 percent between 1996 and 2001.

With continued manufacturer price increases and the introduction of new, expensive drugs, it appears prices will continue to increase at high rates.

The following information provides steps Arizona consumers can take to safely find the prescription drugs needed while minimizing costs.

SHOPPING TIPS TO SAVE MONEY

Ask Your Physician or Pharmacist:

- ✓ Ask your physician and/or pharmacist about ways to save you money.
- ✓ Ask your physician whether a generic drug form for your prescription is available.
- ✓ Ask your physician if there is a less-expensive drug that will have the same desired effects.
- ✓ If you have insurance drug coverage, ask your physician if he or she can prescribe a drug with the lowest co-pay.
- ✓ Ask your physician if he or she can prescribe a higher dosage and split the pill.

Shop Around and Ask about Discounts:

- ✓ Shop around. Prices can vary by pharmacy and store type, sometimes dramatically.
- ✓ Ask your pharmacy if it will match the prices of competitors. If the answer is yes, check with several pharmacies to obtain the lowest price.
- ✓ Ask your pharmacist about availability of pharmacy or government-supported assistance programs and whether you qualify.
- ✓ If you are over a certain age, ask your pharmacist if you may qualify for special discounts.
- ✓ Ask your pharmacist how you can qualify for drug manufacturers' discounts.

- ✓ Some drug companies offer special rebate programs for certain drugs. Some prescriptions may qualify for a rebate, even if you purchase them through an insurance co-pay. Ask your pharmacist.

If You Take a Prescription Drug

Regularly:

- ✓ It is usually cheaper to buy prescription drugs in three to six month quantities. Ask your physician.
- ✓ You might save money by filling your prescriptions over the Internet. Shop around.
- ✓ Some insurance programs offer discounts for mail orders. Check with your benefits officer or insurance provider.

OTHER USEFUL WEB SITES

- www.rxassist.org
- www.helpingpatients.org
- www.Together-Rx.com
- www.fda.gov

WHERE TO SHOP

- Prices are generally lowest for mass merchandise retailers.
- Chain drugstores sometimes charge higher prices than mass merchandise retailers, but may offer specialized services.
- Small, independent pharmacies typically offer more personal and specialized services, but may also charge higher prices.
- Internet and mail order pharmacies often have the lowest prices. But, be careful - quantities and dosages may differ, and some Internet pharmacies may actually charge higher prices. Internet pharmacies may also include an additional charge for shipping.
- The services provided by pharmacies vary from store to store. Ask about services.